

LEAD CAMBODIA
BY MATT FRAN

No Objection To Declassification in Full 2011/04/28 : LOC-HAK-244-8-25-5

PHNOM PENH (AP) -- THE UNITED STATES WILL USE FUNDS IN A COMMODITY IMPORT PROGRAM TO EXTEND ITS AIRLIFT OF SUPPLIES INTO PHNOM PENH AT LEAST ANOTHER MONTH, U.S. SOURCES EMBASSY SOURCES SAID FRIDAY.

THE MONTH-LONG EMERGENCY AIRLIFT OF FOOD, FUEL AND AMMUNITION TO THE BESIEGED CAMBODIAN CAPITAL IS DUE TO EXPIRE NEXT THURSDAY WHEN THE 10.1 MILLION DOLLARS AUTHORIZED TO FUND IT RUNS OUT.

ABOUT 20 MILLION DOLLARS REMAINS IN THE COMMODITY IMPORT PROGRAM RUN BY THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. IT WAS USED TO FINANCE CAMBODIAN IMPORTS OF AMERICAN-MADE MACHINERY AND OTHER GOODS, BUT HAS NOT BEEN USED SINCE KHMER ROUGE INSURGENTS SHUT OFF THE CAPITAL'S LAND AND RIVER SUPPLY ROUTES THIS YEAR.

FRIDAY THERE WAS FIGHTING ON ALL FRONTS AROUND THE BESIEGED CAPITAL. MILITARY SOURCES SAID GOVERNMENT TROOPS KILLED 70 INSURGENTS IN COUNTERATTACKS ON THE EAST BANK OF THE MEKONG RIVER ACROSS FROM PHNOM PENH AND IN AN AREA NORTHEAST OF THE CITY WHERE INSURGENTS HAVE BEEN FIRING ROCKETS AT THE AIRPORT.

TWO CAMBODIAN PHOTOGRAPHERS SAID GOVERNMENT TROOPS KILLED ABOUT 50 INSURGENTS AT THE BESIEGED TOWN OF LUONG TOWN, 32 MILES DOWNRIVER FROM THE CAPITAL, WHICH HAS BEEN UNDER HEAVY KHMER ROUGE PRESSURE SINCE MID-JANUARY.

PHOTOGRAPHERS SOU VICHIT AND CHHOR YUTHY, WHO RETURNED FROM NEAK LUONG, SAID THE REBELS TRIED TO ATTACK ACROSS THE TOWN'S ABANDONED AIRSTRIP AND WERE CUT DOWN BY GOVERNMENT TROOPS DUG IN BUNKERS ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE FIELD.

THE TOWN IS SUPPLIED BY CONTINUOUS PARACHUTE DROPS FROM CIVILIAN-PILOTED C-130 TRANSPORTS.

NEAK LUONG IS CRAMMED WITH AN ESTIMATED 25,000 CIVILIANS. HUNDREDS HAVE BEEN KILLED OR WOUNDED. "THE HOSPITAL IS SO CROWDED WITH WOUNDED," SOA VICHIT SAID. "THERE IS NO PLACE EVEN TO SIT. THERE IS NO MEDICINE."

DURING A LULL IN THE FIGHTING THERE THURSDAY, THE PHOTOGRAPHERS REPORTED, INSURGENTS PLAYED MUSIC OVER A LOUDSPEAKER EAST OF THE TOWN AND CALLED OUT FOR GOVERNMENT TROOPS TO SURRENDER. "STOP FIGHTING," THE INSURGENTS PLEADED. "WE ARE ALL KHMERS. WE CAN TALK TO ONE ANOTHER."

SOME OF THE INSURGENTS DANCED TO THE MUSIC UNTIL A GOVERNMENT AIR FORCE PLANE BOMBED THE AREA.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE WAR THE GOVERNMENT HAS MODIFIED C123 TRANSPORT PLANES TO CARRY BOMBS. A PLANE THIS SIZE CAN CARRY THE BOMB LOAD EQUAL TO ABOUT SIX PROP-DRIVEN T28 FIGHTERS, MILITARY SOURCES SAID.

2ND LEAD CAMBODIA (W066)

PHNOM PENH (AP) - DIPLOMATIC AND GOVERNMENT SOURCES SAID FRIDAY PRESIDENT LON NOL WOULD LEAVE CAMBODIA SOON IN A STEP AIMED AT BRINGING ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE COMMUNIST-LED INSURGENTS. SOURCES IN WASHINGTON SAID HE WOULD STEP DOWN IN TWO WEEKS.

THE REPORTS CAME AS PREMIER LONG BORET FORMED A NEW GOVERNMENT AFTER 11 DAYS OF INFIGHTING AND U.S. SOURCES SAID THE 30-DAY EMERGENCY AIRLIFT TO BESIEGED PHNOM PENH AND THE CAMBODIAN ARMY WOULD BE EXTENDED FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER MONTH.

THE NEW CABINET WAS BALANCED BETWEEN RIVAL FACTIONS OF THE RULING ELITE BUT CONTAINED NO NEW FIGURES WHO COULD LEAD POSSIBLE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE INSURGENTS. ONE TOP POLITICIAN DESCRIBED IT AS "MORE OR LESS A CARETAKER GOVERNMENT" WHICH WOULD SOON BE DISSOLVED AND FOLLOWED BY ONE MORE ACCEPTABLE TO THE KHMER ROUGE INSURGENTS.

U.S. EMBASSY SOURCES SAID THE UNITED STATES WOULD USE FUNDS IN A COMMODITY IMPORT PROGRAM TO EXTEND THE AIRLIFT OF FOOD, FUEL AND AMMUNITION. THE MONTH-LONG AIRLIFT IS DUE TO EXPIRE NEXT THURSDAY WHEN THE 10.1 MILLION DOLLARS AUTHORIZED TO FUND IT RUNS OUT.

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SIHANOUK

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BELGRADE (AP)

GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY OF CAMBODIA WOULD NOT NEGOTIATE OR FORM A COALITION GOVERNMENT WITH THE LON NOL REGIME IN PHNOM PENH.

SIHANOUK, THE FORMER CAMBODIAN CHIEF OF STATE NOW IN EXILE IN PEKING, MADE THE COMMENT IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE CORRESPONDENT OF THE YUGOSLAV OFFICIAL NEWS AGENCY TANJUG IN THE CHINESE CAPITAL.

"EVEN IF THE UNITED STATES REPLACES THE SEVEN TRAITORS, HEADED BY LON NOL, WHO WERE LEADERS FIVE YEARS AGO OF THE COUP AND PROVOKED THE SUFFERING OF PEOPLES, THE LIBERATION UNITED FRONT GOVERNMENT WILL NOT ACCEPT NEGOTIATIONS NOR SIGN ANY DOCUMENT WITH THEM," SIHANOUK SAID.

"IF WE WOULD ACCEPT NEGOTIATIONS, IT WOULD MEAN THAT WE AGREE ON A COMPROMISE SOLUTION, AND, IF WE ACCEPT A COALITION THAT WOULD INCLUDE TRAITORS IN THE GOVERNMENT," HE SAID.

"IT WOULD MEAN ONLY A SEMI-INDEPENDENT CAMBODIA IN WHICH REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE PRESENT MARIONETTE REGIME WOULD REPRESENT AMERICAN INTERESTS IN THAT SO-CALLED COALITION."

SIHANOUK FIRMLY REJECTED AN EVENTUAL ATTEMPT OF WASHINGTON TO INFLUENCE HIM TO BEGIN NEGOTIATION, THE REPORT SAID.

"IF MY GREAT AND HONORABLE FRIEND MIKE MANSFIELD WOULD COME HERE, AS SOME IN AMERICA PROPOSE, I WOULD TELL HIM EXACTLY THE SAME," SIHANOUK WAS QUOTED AS SAYING.

SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD IS THE MAJORITY LEADER OF THE U.S. SENATE AND A LONG-TIME FRIEND OF THE CAMBODIAN LEADER.

SIHANOUK SAID THAT EVEN AMONG FRIENDS OF CAMBODIA IN THE WORLD THERE EXISTS A MISUNDERSTANDING THAT HE AND THE UNITED FRONT WOULD BE READY TO NEGOTIATE A SOLUTION FOR THE CAMBODIAN PROBLEM.

"WE ARE STRONG, STRONGER THAN EVER, WE ARE WINNING THE PRESENT LIBERATION WAR AND WE WISH CAMBODIA TO BE COMPLETELY FREE, INDEPENDENT, NONALIGNED, WITHOUT TRAITORS IN THE GOVERNMENT WOULD MEAN THAT WE ARE SELLING OUT HALF OF OUR FREEDOM ACHIEVED BY SHEDDING BLOOD," HE SAID.

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SIHANOUK PROMISED PARDON TO ALL WHO JOIN HIS FORCES, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF "THE SEVEN TRAITORS, HEADED BY LON NOL, WHO WOULD BE KILLED BY A FIRING SQUAD."

HE SAID THE INSURGENT FORCES WOULD KILL NO ONE WHO DO NOT OPPOSE THEM WITH ARMS AND MADE A SPECIAL PLEDGE TO ALLOW AMERICANS TO LEAVE THE BESIEGED CAPITAL UNHARMED.

"WE PROMISE AMERICANS THAT WE WILL LEAVE THEM ENOUGH TIME TO EVACUATE ALL THEIR PERSONEL AND THEIR CAMBODIAN FRIENDS, AND ONLY THEN WE WILL ENTER PHNOM PENH," SIHANOUK SAID.

SIHANOUK CLAIMED THE INSURGENTS WHO HAVE COMPLETELY SURROUNDED PHNOM PENH COULD INVADE THE CITY AT ANY TIME BUT THAT THEY DID NOT WISH TO DO SO PREMATURELY AND PROVIDE THE UNITED STATES WITH A PRETEXT FOR MILITARY INTERVENTION, THAT OF PROTECTING AMERICANS STILL IN THE CAPITAL.

"WE WISH TO AVOID ARRIVAL OF INFANTRY, MARINES, PARACHUTISTS TANKS AND AIRPLANES IN CAMBODIA NOW WHEN TIME WORKS FOR US. WE WISH TO AVOID DIRECT AMERICAN MILITARY INTERVENTION, AND CAMBODIA WILL BE FREE IN A FEW MONTHS ANYHOW, I THINK FOR SURE BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR," SIHANOUK SAID.

(END)

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